

IN THE SPECIFICATION

[Addition indicated by underlining and deletion indicated by strikeout]

Please amend the Specification as follows:

Paragraph beginning on page 1, line 7 to 10, please amend to read:

“This application is a divisional of United States Patent Application No. 09/808,448, filed March 14, 2001, now U.S. Patent No. 6,620,596, which is based upon and claims the benefit of priority from the prior Japanese Patent Application No. 2000-087302, filed March 27, 2000, the entire contents of which are incorporated herein by reference.”

Paragraph beginning on page 12, line 28 and ending on page 13, line 2 of the specification, please amend to read:

“IFO” indicates that the microorganisms are preserved in Institute for Fermentation, Osaka (IFO), 2-17-85, Zysuhonmachi, Yodogawa-ku, Osaka-shi, 532-0024 JAPAN. The “IFO strains” are available to any person, if desired. *Bacillus stearothermophilus* JTS 859 is under international deposit (the deposit number thereof is FERM BP-6885) in Patent Microorganism Depository, National Institute of Bioscience and Human-Technology, Agency of Industrial Science and Technology. The microorganism *Bacillus stearothermophilus* JTS 859 (FERM BP-6885) was deposited as a national deposit, on October 20, 1987, in the National Institute of Bioscience and Human-Technology, Agency of Industrial Science and Technology, Japan (1-3, Higashi 1-Chome, Tsukubashi, Ibaraki-ken, Japan), which is an international deposit authority designated by the pursuant to BUDAPEST TREATY ON THE INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION OF THE DEPOSIT OF MICROORGANISMS FOR THE PURPOSES OF PATENT PROCEDURE. National deposit number P-9666 was assigned to the strain JTS 859. Thereafter, the strain JTS 859 was transferred from the national deposit to an international deposit on September 22, 1999, and international deposit number FERM BP-6885 was assigned to it.